



307-

2 plates

CHILDREN'S BOOK  
COLLECTION



LIBRARY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES



1  
AM









NARRATIVES

*N. 33-*

OF

ELIZA CUNNINGHAM;

DINAH DODNEY;

AND THE

CHILDREN OF THE FOREST.

---

PUBLISHED BY THE

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,

150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW-YORK.

---

D. Fenshaw, Printer.

1001

RECEIVED

LIBRARY OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

CHILDREN OF THE

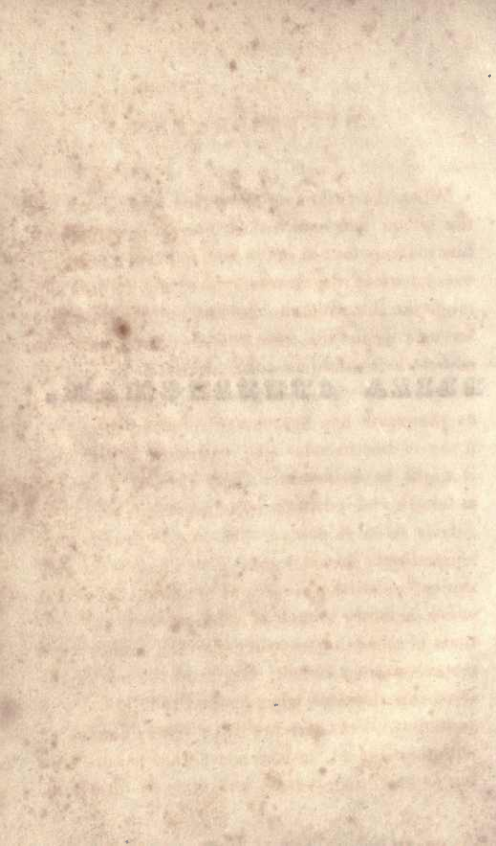
LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

LIBRARY

ELIZA CUNNINGHAM.



## ADVERTISEMENT;

When the following narrative was drawn up, the writer was aware that his feelings rendered him incompetent to judge how much of a relation, every part of which was interesting to himself, might be fit to offer to the public. He therefore wrote only for his friends, and printed no more copies than would be sufficient to distribute within the circle of his personal acquaintance. But as the paper has been much inquired after, and many of his friends have expressed a wish that it might be more extensively circulated, he has at length yielded to their judgment.

It is to be lamented that, in this enlightened age, religion should, by many, be thought the only subject unworthy of serious inquiry. And that while, in every branch of science, they are cautious of admitting any theory which cannot stand the test of experiment, they treat the use of the term experimental, when applied to religion, with contempt. Yet there are many things connected with this subject, in which, whether we are willing or unwilling, we are and must be nearly in-

terested. Death, for instance, is inevitable; and the consequences of death must be important. Many persons die, as they live, thoughtless of what consequences may await them. Others leave the world with reluctance and terror. And there are others who, though conscious that they are sinners, and sure that they are about to enter on an unchangeable and endless state of existence, possess peace, composure, and joy. These declare that they owe this happy state of mind to their dependence on Jesus the Saviour, on whose death and mediation they have built their hopes. And who can disprove their words?—Such an instance is now in the reader's hands. The fact is indubitable. A child under the age of fifteen did thus rejoice in the midst of pains and agonies, to the admiration of all who beheld her. She was willing to leave all her friends whom she dearly loved, and by whom she was tenderly beloved; for she knew whom she believed, and that when she should be absent from the body, she should be present with the Lord. With this assurance, she triumphed in the prospect of glory, and smiled upon the approach of death.

# ELIZA CUNNINGHAM.

---

## A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

---

As I write not for the eye of the public, but chiefly to put a testimony of the Lord's goodness into the hands of my dear friends, who have kindly afforded us their sympathy and prayers on the late occasion, I do not mean either to restrain the emotions of my heart, or to apologize for them. I shall write simply and freely, as I might speak to a person to whose intimacy and tenderness I might fully intrust myself, and who, I know, will bear with all my weaknesses.

In May, 1782, my sister Cunningham was at Edinburgh, chiefly on the account of her eldest daughter, then in the 14th year of her age, who was very ill of a consumption. She had already buried an only son, at the age of twelve; and while all a mother's care and feelings were engaged by the rapid decline of a second amiable child, she was unexpectedly bereaved of an affectionate and excellent husband. Her trials

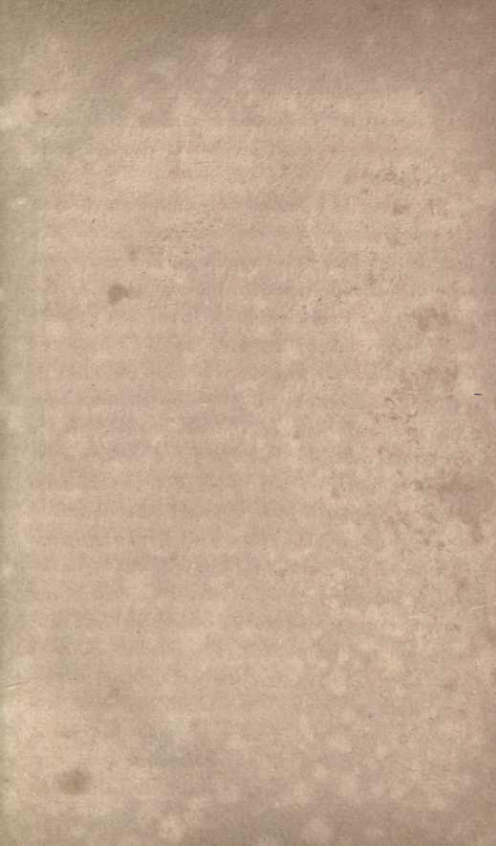
were great ; but the Lord had prepared her for them. She was a believer. Her faith was strong, her graces active, her conduct exemplary. She walked with God, and he supported her. And though she was a tender and sympathizing friend, she had a happy firmness of temper ; so that her character as a christian, and the propriety of her behavior in every branch of relative life, appeared with peculiar advantage in the season of affliction. She returned to Anstruther a widow, with her sick child, who languished till October, and then died.

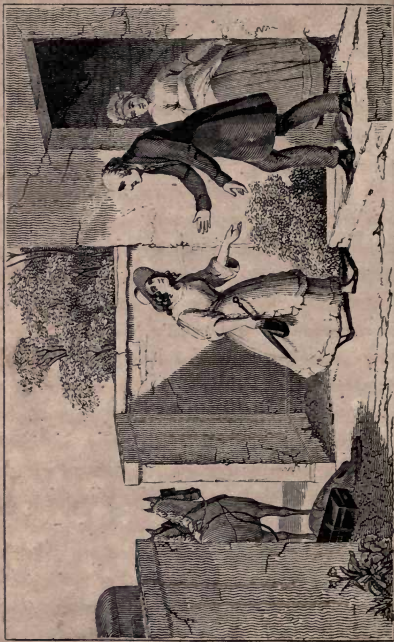
Though my sister had many valuable and pleasing connections in Scotland, yet her strongest tie being broken, she readily accepted my invitation to come and live with us. She was not only dear to me as Mrs. Newton's sister, but we had lived long in the habits of intimate friendship. I knew her worth, and she was partial to me. She had yet one child remaining, her dear Eliza. We already had a dear orphan niece, whom we had, about seven years before, adopted for our own daughter. My active, fond imagination anticipated the time of her arrival, and drew a pleasing picture of the addition the company of such a sister, such a friend, would make to the

happiness of our family. The children likewise, —there was no great disparity between them, either in years or stature. From what I had heard of Eliza, I was prepared to love her before I saw her; though she came afterwards into my hands like a heap of untold gold, which, when counted over, proves to be a larger sum than was expected. My fancy paired and united these children; I hoped that the friendship between us and my sister would be perpetuated in them. I seemed to see them, like twin sisters, of one heart and mind, habited nearly alike, always together, always with us.—Such was my plan; but the Lord's plan was very different, and therefore mine failed. It is happy for us, poor short-sighted mortals, unable as we are to foresee the consequences of our own wishes, that if we know and trust him, he often is pleased to put a merciful negative upon our purposes, and condescends to choose better for us than we can for ourselves. What might have been the issue of my plan, had it taken place, I know not; but I can now praise and adore him for the gracious issue of his. I praise his name, that I can cheerfully comply with his word, which says, "Be still, and know that I am God." I not only can bow (as it be-

comes a creature and a sinner to do) to his sovereignty, but I admire his wisdom and goodness, and can say from my heart, "he has done all things well."

My sister had settled her affairs previous to her removal; and nothing remained but to take leave of her friends, of whom she had many, not only in Anstruther, but in different parts of the country. In February, 1783, I received a letter from her, which, before I opened it, I expected was to inform me that she was upon the road in her way to London. But the information was, that, in a little journey she had made to bid a friend farewell, she had caught a violent cold, which brought on a fever and a cough, with other symptoms, which, although she described as gently as possible, that we might not be alarmed, obliged *me* to give up instantly the hope of seeing her. Succeeding letters confirmed my suspicions; her malady increased, and she was soon confined to her bed. Eliza was at school at Musselburgh. Till then she had enjoyed a perfect state of health; but while her dear mother was rapidly declining, *she* likewise caught a great cold, and her life likewise was soon thought to be in danger. On this occasion, that





ELIZA CUNNINGHAM—p. 11.

fortitude and resolution which strongly marked my sister's character, was remarkably displayed. She knew that her own race was almost finished ; she earnestly desired that Eliza might live or die with us ; and the physicians advised a speedy removal into the south. Accordingly, to save time, and to save Eliza from the impression which the sight of a dying mother might probably make upon her spirits, and possibly apprehensive that the interview might make too great an impression upon her own, she sent this, her only, beloved child, directly to London, without letting her come home to take a last leave of her. She contented herself with committing and bequeathing her child to our care and love, in a letter, which, I believe, was the last she was able to write. Thus powerfully recommended by the pathetic charge of a dying mother, the dearest friend we had upon the earth, and by that plea for compassion which her illness might have strongly urged even upon strangers, we received our dear Eliza, as a trust and as a treasure, on the 15th of March. My sister lived long enough to have the comfort of knowing, not only that she was safely arrived, but was perfectly pleased with her new situation. She was now freed from all earthly cares. She

suffered much in the remaining part of her illness, but she knew whom she believed ; she possessed a peace past understanding, and a hope full of glory. She entered into the joy of her Lord on the 10th of May, 1783, respected and regretted by all who knew her.

I soon perceived that the Lord had sent me a treasure indeed. Eliza's person was agreeable. There was an ease and elegance in her whole address, and a gracefulness in her movements, till long illness and great weakness bowed her down. Her disposition was lively, her genius quick and inventive ; and if she had enjoyed health, she probably would have excelled in every thing that required ingenuity. Her understanding, particularly her judgment and her sense of propriety, were far above her years. There was something in her appearance that usually procured her favor at the first sight. She was honored by the notice of several persons of distinction, which, though I thankfully attribute in part to their kindness to me, I believe was a good deal owing to something rather uncommon in her. But her principal endearing qualities, which could be only fully known to us who lived with her, were the sweetness of her temper, and a heart

formed for the exercise of affection, gratitude, and friendship. Whether, when at school, she might have heard sorrowful tales from children, who, having lost their parents, met with a great difference in point of tenderness when they came under the direction of uncles and aunts, and might think that all uncles and aunts were alike, I know not ; but I have understood since from herself, that she did not come to us with any highly-raised expectations of the treatment she was to meet with. But as she found (the Lord in mercy having opened our hearts to receive her) that it was hardly possible for her own parents to have treated her more tenderly, and that it was from that time the business and the pleasure of our lives to study how to oblige her, and how to alleviate the afflictions which we were unable to remove ; so we likewise found that the seeds of our kindness could hardly be sown in a more promising and fruitful soil. I know not that either her aunt or I ever saw a cloud upon her countenance during the time she was with us. It is true, we did not, we could not, unnecessarily cross her ; but if we thought it expedient to overrule any proposal she made, she acquiesced with a sweet smile ; and we were certain we

should never hear of that proposal again. Her delicacy, however, was quicker than our observation; and she would sometimes say, when we could not perceive the least reason for it, "I am afraid I answer you peevishly; indeed I did not intend it: if I did, I ask your pardon; I should be very ungrateful if I thought any pleasure equal to that of endeavoring to please you." It is no wonder that we dearly loved such a child.

The hectic fever, cough, and sweats, which she brought with her from Scotland, were subdued in the course of the summer, and there appeared no reason to apprehend that she would be taken off very suddenly. But still there was a worm preying upon the root of this pretty gourd. She had seldom any severe pain till within the last fortnight of her life, and usually slept well; but when awake she was always ill. I believe she knew not a single hour of perfect ease; and they who intimately knew her state could not but wonder to see her so placid, cheerful, and attentive when in company, as she generally was. Many a time, when the tears have silently stolen down her cheeks, if she saw that her aunt or I observed her, she would wipe them away, come to us with a smile and a kiss, and say, "Do not

be uneasy—I am not very ill—I can bear it—I shall be better presently ;” or to that effect.

In April, 1784, we put her under the care of my dear friend Dr. Benamor. To the blessing of the Lord on his skill and endeavors I ascribe the pleasure of having her continued with us so long ; nor can I sufficiently express my gratitude for his assiduous, unwearied attention, nor for his great tenderness. She is now gone, and can no more repeat, what she has often spoken, of the great comfort it was to her to have so affectionate and sympathizing a physician ; but while I live, I hope it will always be my pleasure to acknowledge our great obligations to him on her account. His prescriptions were carefully followed. But what can the most efficacious medicines or the best physicians avail to prolong life, when the hour approaches in which the prayer of the great Intercessor must be accomplished, “Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, to behold my glory!” This was the proper cause of my dear Eliza’s death. The Lord sent this child to me to be brought up for him ; he owned my poor endeavors ; and when her education was completed, and she was ripened for heaven, he

took her home to himself. He has richly paid me my wages, in the employment itself, and in the happy issue.

I have thus put together, in one view, a brief account of what relates to her illness, till within the last three weeks of her pilgrimage. I now come to what is much more important and interesting. Her excellent parents had conscientiously endeavored to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and principles of religion were instilled into her from infancy. Their labors were so far successful, that no child could be more obedient or obliging, or more remote from evil habits or evil temper. But I could not perceive, when she first came to us, that she had any heart-affecting sense of divine things; but being under my roof, she, of course, when her health would permit, attended on my ministry, and was usually present when I prayed and expounded the Scriptures, morning and evening, in the family. Friends and ministers were likewise frequently with us, whose character and conversation were well suited to engage her notice, and to help her to form a right idea of the christian principles and temper. Knowing that she was of a thinking turn, I left her to make her

own reflections upon what she saw and heard, committing her to the direction of the Lord, from whom I had received her, and entreating him to be her effectual teacher. When I did attempt to talk with her on the concerns of her soul, she could give me no answer but with tears. But I soon had great encouragement to hope that the Lord had both enlightened her understanding, and had drawn the desires of her heart to himself. Great was her delight in the ordinances; exemplary her attention under the preaching. To be debarred from going to hear at our stated times was a trial, which, though she patiently bore, seemed to affect her more than any other; and she did not greatly care what she endured in the rest of the week, provided she was well enough to attend the public worship. The judicious observations she occasionally made upon what had passed in conversation, upon incidents, books, and sermons, indicated a sound scriptural judgment, and a spiritual taste. And my hope was confirmed by her whole deportment, which was becoming the Gospel of Christ. So that had she died suddenly on any day within about a year and half past, I should have had no doubt she had passed from

death unto life. But I could seldom prevail with her to speak of herself: if she did, it was with the greatest diffidence and caution.

In the last two or three weeks of her life she became acquainted with acute pain, to which she had till then been much a stranger. Her gentle spirit, which had borne up under a long and languishing illness, was not so capable of supporting pain. It did not occasion any improper temper of language, but it wore her away apace. Friday, the 30th of September, she was down stairs for the last time, and then she was brought down and carried up in my arms.

It now became very desirable to hear from herself a more explicit account of the hope that was in her; especially as upon some symptoms of an approaching mortification she appeared to be a little alarmed, and of course not thoroughly reconciled to the thoughts of death. Her aunt waited for the first convenient opportunity of intimating to her the probability that the time of her departure was at hand. The next morning, Saturday, the 1st of October, presented one. She found herself remarkably better: her pains were almost gone; her spirits revived; the favorable change was visible in her countenance

Her aunt began to break the subject to her, by saying, "My dear, were you not extremely ill last night?"

She answered, "Indeed I was."

"Had you not been relieved, I think you could not have continued long."

"I believe I could not."

"My dear, I have been very anxiously concerned for your life."

"But I hope, my dear aunt, you are not so now."

She then opened her mind and spoke freely. I cannot repeat the whole. The substance was to this effect :

"My views of things have been, for some time, very different from what they were when I came to you. I have seen and felt the vanity of childhood and youth."

Her aunt said, "I believe you have long made conscience of secret prayer."

She answered, "Yes, I have long and earnestly sought the Lord with reference to the change that is now approaching. I have not the full assurance which is so desirable; but I have a hope, I trust a good hope; and I believe the Lord will give me whatever he sees necessary for me before he is pleased to take me hence."

She then said, "I have prayed to him to fit me for himself; and then, whether it be sooner or later, it signifies but little."

Here was a comfortable point gained. We were satisfied that she had given up all expectations of living, and could speak of her departure without being distressed.

It will not be expected that a child at her age should speak systematically. Nor had she learned her religion from a system or form of words, however sound. The Lord himself was her teacher. But from what little she had at different times said to me, I was well satisfied that she had received a true conviction of the nature of sin, and of her own state by nature as a sinner. When she spoke of the Lord, she meant the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd, who gathers such lambs in his arms and carries them in his bosom. She believed him to be God and man in one person; and that hope of which she was not ashamed, was founded on his atonement, grace, and power. As I do not intend to put words into her mouth which she never spoke, I mention this, lest any should be disappointed at not finding a certain phraseology to which they have been accustomed.

Her apparent revival was of short duration. In the evening of the same day she complained of a sore throat, which became worse, and by Sabbath noon threatened suffocation. When Dr. Benamor, who the day before had almost entertained hopes of her recovery, found her so suddenly and greatly altered, he could not, at the moment, prevent some signs of concern from appearing in his countenance. She quickly perceived it, and desired he would plainly tell her his sentiments.

When he had recovered himself, he said, "My dear, you are not so well as when I saw you on Saturday." She answered, that she trusted all would be well soon. He replied, that whether she lived or died it would be well, and to the glory of God. He told me that he had much pleasing conversation with her that morning, some particulars of which he had committed to writing, but that he had lost the paper. From that time she may be said to have been dying, as we expected her departure from one hour to another.

On Monday, the 3d, she was almost free from any complaint in the throat; but there was again an appearance of a mortification in her legs; it

was however again repelled by the means which Dr. Benamor prescribed.

I recollect but little of the incidents of this day: in general she was in great pain, sometimes in agonies, unable to remain many minutes in the same position; but her mind was peaceful. She possessed a spirit of recollection and prayer; and her attention to earthly things was confined to the concern she saw in those around her. That she might not increase their distress, she strove to conceal the sense of her sufferings. It pleased the Lord wonderfully to support my dear Mrs. Newton, and she had a tolerable night's rest, though I did not expect the child would live till morning.

On Tuesday, the 4th, about nine in the morning, we all thought her dying, and waited nearly two hours by her bed-side for her last breath. She was much convulsed, and in great agonies. I said, "My dear, you are going to heaven; and I hope, by the grace of God, we shall in due time follow you." She could not speak, but let us know by a gentle nod of her head, and a sweet smile, that she attended to what I said. I repeated to her many passages of Scripture and verses of hymns, to each of which she made the same

kind of answer. Though silent, her looks were more expressive than words. Towards eleven o'clock, a great quantity of coagulated phlegm, which she had not strength to bring up, made her rattle violently in the throat, which we considered as a sign that death was at hand; and as she seemed unwilling to take something that was offered to her, we were loth to disturb her in her last moments, (as we supposed,) by pressing her. I think she must have died in a quarter of an hour, had not Dr. Benamor just then come into the room.

He felt her pulse, and observed that she was not near death by her pulse, and desired that something might be given her. She was perfectly sensible, though still unable to speak, but expressed her unwillingness to take any thing by her strongest efforts. However, she yielded to entreaty; and a tea-spoonful or two of some liquid soon cleared the passage, and she revived. Her pain, however, was extreme, and her disappointment great. I never saw her so near impatience as on this occasion. As soon as she could speak she cried, "O cruel, cruel, cruel, to recall me, when I was so happy, and so near gone! I wish you had not come—I long to go

home." But in a few minutes she grew composed, assented to what the doctor said of her duty to wait the Lord's time; and from that hour, though her desires to depart and to be with her Saviour were stronger and stronger, she cheerfully took whatever was offered to her, and frequently asked for something of her own accord.

How often, were we to have our choice, should we counteract our own prayers! I had entreated the Lord to prolong her life, till she could leave an indisputable testimony behind her for our comfort: yet when I saw her agony, and heard her say, O how cruel to stop me! I was for a moment almost of her mind, and could hardly help wishing that the doctor had delayed his visit a little longer. But if she had died then, we should have been deprived of what we saw and heard the two following days; the remembrance of which is now much more precious to me than silver or gold.

When the doctor came on Wednesday, she entreated him to tell her how long he thought she might live. He said, "Are you in earnest, my dear?" She answered, "Indeed I am." At that time there were very great appearances that

a mortification was actually begun. He therefore told her, he thought it possible she might hold out till eight in the evening, but did not expect she could survive midnight at farthest. On hearing him say so, low as she was, her eyes seemed to sparkle with their former vivacity; and fixing them on him with an air of ineffable satisfaction, she said, "Oh, that is good news indeed." And she repeated it as such to a person who came soon after into the room, and said, with lively emotions of joy, "The doctor tells me I shall stay here but a few hours longer." In the afternoon she noticed and counted the clock, I believe, every time it struck; and when it struck seven, she said, "Another hour, and then." But it pleased the Lord to spare her to us another day.

She suffered much in the course of Wednesday night, but was quite resigned and patient. Our kind servants, who, from their love to her and to us, watched her day and night with a solicitude and tenderness which wealth is too poor to purchase, were the only witnesses of the affectionate and grateful manner in which she repeatedly thanked them for their services and attention to her. Though such an acknowledgment was no more than due, yet coming from herself, and at

such a time, they highly valued it. She added her earnest prayers that the Lord would reward them. To her prayers my heart says, Amen. May they be comforted of the Lord in their dying hours, as she was, and meet with equal kindness from those around them !

I was surprised on Thursday morning to find her not only alive, but in some respects better. The tokens of mortification again disappeared. This was her last day, and it was a memorable day with us. When Dr. Benamor asked her how she did, "Truly happy," said she, "and if this be dying, it is a pleasant thing to die." (The very expression which a dear friend of mine used upon her death-bed a few years ago.) She said to me, about ten o'clock, "My dear uncle, I would not change conditions with any person upon earth : O how gracious is the Lord to me ! Oh, what a change is before me !" She was several times asked if she could wish to live, provided the Lord would restore her to perfect health : her answer was, "Not for all the world ;" and sometimes, "Not for a thousand worlds."

The last time she was asked this question, she said, as I have been since informed, "I desire to have no choice." "Do not weep for me," said

she, " my dear aunt, but rather rejoice and praise on my account." We asked her if she would choose a text for her own funeral sermon. She readily mentioned, " Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." " That," said she, " has been my experience ; my afflictions have been many, but not one too many : nor has the greatest of them all been too great ;—I praise him for them all." But after a pause, she said, " Stay, I think there is another text which may do better ;—let it be, ' Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ;'—THAT is my experience now." She likewise chose a hymn to be sung after the sermon :

" In vain my fancy strives to paint  
" The moment after death ;  
" The glories that surround a saint  
" When yielding up his breath.

" One gentle sigh his fetters breaks,  
" We scarce can say, ' He's gone !'  
" Before the willing spirit takes  
" Its mansion near the throne.

" Faith strives, but all its efforts fail  
" To trace the spirit's flight ;  
" No eye can pierce within the veil  
" Which hides the world of light.

“ Thus much (and this is all) we know,

“ Saints are completely blest ;

“ Have done with sin, and care, and wo,

“ And with their Saviour rest :

“ On harps of gold they praise his name,

“ His face they always view ;

“ Then let us followers be of them,

“ That we may praise him too.”     Newton.

But I must check myself, and set down but a small part of the gracious words which the Lord enabled her to speak in the course of the day, though she was frequently interrupted by pains and agonies.

She had something to say, either in a way of admonition or consolation, as she thought most suitable, to every one she saw. To her most constant attendant she said, “ Be sure you continue to call on the Lord ; and if you think he does not hear you now, he will at last, as he has heard me.” She spoke a great deal to an intimate friend who was with her every day, which I hope she will long remember, as the testimony of her dying Eliza. Among other things she said, “ See how comfortable the Lord can make a dying bed ! Do you think that you shall have such an assurance when you come to die ?” Being answered,

"I hope so, my dear;" she replied, "But do you earnestly, and with all your heart, pray to the Lord for it? If you seek him, you shall surely find him." She then prayed affectionately and fervently for her friend, afterwards for her cousin, and then for another of our family who was present. Her prayer was not long, but every word was weighty, and her manner was very affecting. The purport was, that they might all be taught and comforted by the Lord. About five in the afternoon she desired me to pray with her once more. Surely I then prayed from my heart. When I had finished, she said, "Amen." I said, "My dear child, have I expressed your meaning?" She answered, "O yes!" and then added, "I am ready to say, Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming? But I hope he will enable me to wait his hour with patience." These were the last words I heard her speak.

Mrs. Newton's heart was much, perhaps too much, attached to this dear child; which is not to be wondered at, considering what sort of a child she was, and how long and how much she had suffered. But the Lord was pleased graciously to support her in this trying season. Indeed, there was more cause for joy than for grief; yet

the pain of separation will be felt. Eliza well knew her feelings, and a concern for her was, I believe, the last anxiety that remained with her. She said to those about her, "Try to persuade my aunt to leave the room; I think I shall soon go to sleep; I shall not remain with you till the morning. Her aunt, however, was the last person who heard her speak, and was sitting by her bed when she went away. A little after six, hearing that a relation who dearly loved her, and was beloved by her, who had come daily from Westminster to see her, was below stairs, she said, "Raise me up, that I may speak to him once more." Her aunt said, "My dear, you are nearly exhausted, I think you had better not attempt it." She smiled, and said, "It is very well, I will not." She was then within half an hour of her translation to glory; but the love of her dear Lord had so filled her with benevolence, that she was ready to exert herself to her last breath, in hope of saying something that might be useful to others after she was gone.

Towards seven o'clock I was walking in the garden, and earnestly engaged in prayer for her, when a servant came to me and said, "She is gone." O Lord, how great is thy power! how

great is thy goodness! A few days before, had it been practicable and lawful, what would I not have given to procure her recovery? Yet seldom in my life have I known a more heartfelt joy than when these words, *She is gone*, sounded in my ears. I ran up stairs, and our whole little family was soon around her bed. Though her aunt and another person were sitting with their eyes fixed upon her, she was gone perhaps a few minutes before she was missed. She lay upon her left side, with her cheek gently reclining upon her hand, as if in a sweet sleep; and I thought there was a smile upon her countenance. Never, surely, did death appear in a more beautiful, inviting form. We fell upon our knees, and I returned, I think I may say, my most unfeigned thanks to our God and Saviour, for his abundant goodness to her, crowned in this last instance by giving her so gentle a dismissal. Yes, I am satisfied; I am comforted. And if one of the many involuntary tears I have shed could have recalled her to life, to health, to an assemblage of all that this world could contribute to her happiness, I would have labored hard to suppress it. Now my largest desires for her are accomplished. The days of her mourning are ended. She is landed on that peaceful shore

where the storms of trouble never blow. She is for ever out of the reach of sorrow, sin, temptation, and snares. Now is she before the throne ; she sees Him whom, not having seen, she loved ; she drinks of the rivers of pleasure which are at his right hand, and shall thirst no more.

She was born February 6, 1771 ; and breathed her spirit into her Redeemer's hands a little before seven in the evening, on October 6, 1785, aged fourteen years and eight months.

---

I shall be glad if this little narrative may prove an encouragement to christians who have children. May we not conceive the Lord saying to us, as Pharaoh's daughter said to the mother of Moses, " Take this child, and bring it up for me, and I will pay thee thy wages !" How solemn the trust ! important and difficult the charge of it ! but how rich the reward, if our endeavors are crowned with success ! And we have every thing to hope from his power and goodness, if, in dependance upon his blessing, we can fully and diligently aim at fulfilling his will. Happy they who shall say at the last day, " Behold, here am I, and the children which thou hast given me !"

Many children will likewise see this narrative. May it convince them that it is practicable and good to seek the Lord betimes ! My dear Eliza's state of languor prevented her from associating with young people of her own age so frequently and freely as she might otherwise have done. But these papers will come into the hands of such. To them I particularly recommend and dedicate this relation. Oh, my dear young friends, had you seen with what dignity of spirit she filled up the last scene of her life, you must have been affected by it ! Let not the liveliness of your spirits, and the gaiety of the prospect around you, prevent you from considering, that to you likewise days will certainly come (unless you are suddenly snatched out of life) when you will say and feel that the world, and all in it, can afford you no pleasure. But there is a Saviour, Jesus Christ, a Mighty One, always near, always gracious to those who seek him. May you, like her, be enabled to choose him as the Guide of your youth and the Lord of your hearts. Then, like her, you will find support and comfort under affliction, wisdom to direct your conduct, a good hope in death, and by death a happy translation to everlasting life.

I have only to add my prayers that a blessing from on high may descend upon the persons and families of all my friends, and upon all into whose hands this paper may providentially come.

JOHN NEWTON.

---

LINES BY REV. J. NEWTON.

*To my dear Elizabeth, on the Anniversary of her Birth-day*

May the important, favor'd morn,  
With praises still remember'd be ;  
When you, my dearest child, were born  
Born for the Lord, and born for me.

We hope for day when dawn appears ;  
For fruit from blossoms fully blown ;  
Such hopes you raised in early years,  
That he had mark'd you for his own.

To me in mercy you were sent,  
To guide you in this wilderness :  
Unworthy was the instrument,  
But his appointment gave success.

A little stranger when you came,  
I found I had an easy part ;  
For though without a parent's name,  
I quickly found a parent's heart.

And you were then, what still you are,  
So grateful, teachable, and mild,  
You well deserved my kindest care,  
I well might boast of such a child.

But as on thorns our roses grow,  
And pleasure still is dash'd with pain;  
I lived to see my gourd brought low,  
And fear'd it ne'er would bloom again.

This only time you caused me grief—  
Did oft in prayer my heart engage;  
My prayer was heard, and brought relief  
From Satan's and the fever's rage.

My child, who now I trust is thine,  
To thee, dear Saviour, I commend;  
Vouchsafe upon her heart to shine,  
Be thou her guardian, guide, and friend.



EARLY PIETY;

OR THE HISTORY OF

**MISS DINAH DOWNEY,**

PORTSEA, ENGLAND.

---

BY REV. JOHN GRIFFIN.

EARLY LIFE

OF THE

REVEREND JOHN CRISTIAN

BY REV. JOHN CRISTIAN

## DINAH DOUDNEY.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,\*

Godly parents are great blessings; and good children are a great comfort to their parents. The Lord gave the woman of Shunem a little boy; "And when the child was grown, it fell on a day that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, *My head, my head!* And he said to a lad, carry him to his mother." It is a good thing for a child to have a kind mother to go to when he is ill.

"And when he had brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died." You see little children may die as well as grown people, and die very suddenly too. The Lord who gives us our life, has a right to take it away when he pleases. Some children die at five years old; some at six or seven; and some grow up to be men and women; Dinah was nine years of age; this is all as it pleases God. He gives and he

\* The number of children present when this address was delivered it is thought exceeded *one thousand five hundred.*

takes away. The Lord afflicted the Shunammite's child with a pain in the head, of which he soon died. His mother was a godly woman, and went to the prophet Elisha in her distress. She thought her child was gone to heaven, and that God knew what was best for her ; and therefore she did not murmur at what the Lord had done. When Gehazi, the prophet's servant, asked her, "Is it well with thee ? is it well with thy husband ? is it well with the child ?" she answered, "It is well."

Miss Doudney was very ill more than a year before her death. When she was first taken, she thought that she should die very soon. She said one day to her aunt, with whom she resided, (as her own mother was dead,) "When I am dead, I should like Mr. Griffin to preach a sermon to children, to persuade them to love Jesus Christ—to obey their parents—not to tell lies—and tell them to think about dying, and going to heaven. I have been thinking what text I should like him to preach from : 2 Kings, 4 : 26. You are the Shunammite, Mr. G. is the prophet, and I am the Shunammite's child. When I am dead I dare say you will be grieved, though you need not. The prophet will come to see you ; and when he says,

How is it with the child? you may say, It is well—I am sure it will then be well with me; for I shall be in heaven singing the praises of God. You ought to think it well too.”

Now, my dear children, I will prove to you that Dinah did not think and talk about heaven carelessly, as some children do; and that she did not talk about the hope of going to heaven in a light and trifling manner, without knowing what she was talking about. She examined the Bible, and asked a great number of questions of those who she thought could tell her the meaning of the word of God, that she might not be deceived.

It is an awful thing to talk about heaven and never to enjoy it—to hope to go to heaven without knowing why. It is equally sad to hope to go to heaven without having Scriptural reasons for it. Even children, as well as grown people, should strive to be always ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.

1. Dinah's religion *began very early, and lasted till death*. When she was between three and four years of age, her parents observed a remarkable tenderness of conscience. She was very much impressed with the thought that God always saw

all she did, and knew all she thought, and every word she spoke. She was never known to tell a lie; if she did any thing wrong, she never denied it.

Her mother died when she was about five years old. While she lay in her coffin, the servant carried Dinah into the room to see her mother; but the sight so much affected her that she said, "I will never see my mother any more." The next day she was taken into the room again, and turning her head, she saw her mother. "O, I have told a lie," said she, "I said I will never see my mother any more. O, shall I be forgiven? Will the Lord pardon me?" Her friends endeavored to remove the distress from her mind by telling her it was not wrong, as she did not mean it, and she did not go into the room of her own will. For many months she often appeared uneasy about sinning against God in telling this lie. Frequently hanging about her uncle's neck and weeping, she said again and again, "Will the Lord forgive me? Do you think the Lord will forgive me? Pray to the Lord to forgive me."

After this, for many months, she was observed never to speak positively, and she rarely did so during her life. It was her custom to say, I be-

lieve so—I think so—I think I will—or, I think I will not.

From the time she was between five and six years of age, she used to take her books up with her at night ; and in the morning she taught her younger sister to read, which she did almost all herself. She then read a hymn and sung it, and prayed with her sister. Dinah did not only say the prayers she had learned, but used to pray out of her own heart for such things as she thought she and her sister stood in need of. She prayed that God would give her a new heart—that he would pardon her sins, and help her to love and serve Jesus Christ.

Many children who have godly parents to teach them, think about good things sometimes, and talk about them ; but this soon wears off, and they think no more about them. The older they grow the less they feel concerned about religious things. But it was not so with Dinah ; the older she grew the more she loved Jesus Christ, and prayed that she might serve him.

O what a happy thing it would be if you, my little boy, and you, my dear little girl, and all you dear children, loved Jesus Christ, and prayed to him, and served him, as Dinah did. Some of you

never thought about dying, and going to heaven. You are as old as Dinah was, and some of you are older ; yet you never prayed in earnest, that the Lord would give you a new heart—that he would forgive your sins, and make you holy children. Naughty children's hearts are like "a cage of unclean birds." You would not, surely, like to bring ugly and unclean birds into a room to show your friends, with a cage full of uncleanness. And do you think the Lord would like to have the souls of children in heaven without making them clean first ? That is an unclean heart which indulges naughty thoughts ; out of which come naughty words, and an obstinate temper ; which dislikes to read good books, and to pray to God. It was because Dinah thought her heart was in this manner unclean, that she prayed to have a new one ; that is, instead of having bad thoughts, to have good ones ; instead of having a bad temper, to have a kind, tender, obedient, and loving temper.

Perhaps some of you do pray to have a clean heart and a right spirit, as Dinah did. Well then, my dear children, continue to pray for it. When you ask your kind father for bread, he does not give you a stone : and if you ask him for meat,

he does not give you the rod ; he gives you such things as you ask for, because he loves you, and knows you want these things. God is a great deal more kind than your father can be, and he has promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Jesus Christ loves little children, and says, "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me."

But you, little boy, that told such a wilful lie the other day, if you should be ill and die, what do you think will become of you ? and you, little girl there, who stole the little maid's thimble the other day, and then told a lie to hide the fault, what do you think will become of you ? That great boy there, who played truant some time ago because he would not learn his book nor say his catechism, and then told his mother he had been to school, what can we think will become of that wicked boy ?

And that other great boy, whose father is dead, and he does not love nor obey his mother : instead of going to a place of worship on a Sabbath day, he seeks the company of bad boys, and would rather go to play on the Sabbath than read his Bible. Though he has often made his mother weep, and heard her say, You will break my

heart if you go on in such wicked ways, yet he does not regard the tears, nor feel for the misery of his kind and tender mother. What, my dear children, do you think will become of such an awfully wicked boy as this? O let us all pray that God would turn his wicked and cruel heart.

That great girl there, whose mother is very ill, and she is not willing to wait upon her, stays with other bad girls when she goes on errands; grieves her mother, and makes her illness worse by her ill-temper, indolence, pride, discontent, and impertinent words. She does not love Christ, nor pray to God, and never loves to read her Bible. O naughty and hard-hearted girl! Where do you think she will go when she dies? Remember what one of the hymns says, which Dinah very often sung:

“ There is, beyond the sky,  
“ A heav’n of joy and love,  
“ And holy children, when they die,  
“ Go to that world above.

“ There is a dreadful hell,  
“ And everlasting pains,  
“ Where sinners must with devils dwell,  
“ In darkness, fire, and chains.”

2 Dinah’s religion was *real*, not *feigned*. It was

not put on for the sake of making people think she was good. Her religion was not only in knowledge, it was the religion of the heart.

She thought much about good things, and talked much about them. She asked a great number of questions about the fall of man—the death of Christ—and the experience of a christian. She spoke much about the love of Christ in coming into the world to save sinners. She said, "O what could induce him to come from heaven, to suffer in his life and death for sinners, and for sinner-me too!" When her aunt was talking to her once of the love of Christ, she said, "You have told me more than I ever knew before. Pray tell me more about Jesus Christ. O I wonder all the men and women in the world do not love Jesus Christ!" What hard hearts those children must have who do not love Jesus Christ! He was nailed to the cross by his hands and feet, that he might bear our sins, and save them that believe in him from everlasting burnings.

3. This dear child was *very much engaged in prayer*. When in family worship, she was, from six years of age, always very attentive, and very serious. She knelt upright; did not put her head in the chair as though she would go to sleep; nor

did she look about ; but kept her eyes shut, and endeavored to keep her thoughts employed upon the subject her uncle was praying about.

Dinah took great delight in secret prayer. She used to go three or four times a day by herself for prayer, and perhaps oftener ; because she always contrived to go when she supposed it would not be known what she went for. Her friends sometimes asked her why she went up stairs by herself so often. Though she did not boast of praying, she was not ashamed of it ; but said, I have been to prayer. Her uncle once said, " I have been listening if I could hear you ; but I could not hear you say a word." She replied, " No ; that would be like the Pharisees, who pray in the market places to be seen of men. Jesus Christ says we should pray in secret."

She desired her minister to pray for her, saying, " The prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Very often she would go to prayer with a little brother and sister who were younger than herself ; but this would not have been known if they had not told it, she did it so secretly. About a year and a half before she died, when there was a great alarm of a French invasion, she said, " Well, these are praying times indeed." " Let

us," said she to her brother and sister, "go and pray to the Lord." Her aunt could not listen, as she was then busy; but when they came down stairs, she asked her what she had been praying for. She answered, "I have been praying to the Lord to be our defender and deliverer. If the Lord could raise up stripling David to slay Goliath, he can surely raise up men to contend with Bonaparte! He that saved Daniel from the lions' den, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from being burned in the fiery furnace, can easily find a way to deliver us if we cry to him. Indeed," continued she, "if God delivered a city by a woman, he could even make such a little creature as I am the means of saving a nation, if he pleased."

Do you, my dear child, ever go by yourself to pray that the Lord would bless you, and teach you by his Spirit to believe in Jesus Christ, and to love him? Some of you never pray, but say bad words and tell lies. Some of you used to say the prayers your mother taught you when you were little; but, now you are grown older, you have left them off—you go to bed at night and rise in the morning without prayer. This makes me fear you are not fit to go to heaven. Re-

member, you must be born again—must repent of your sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, before you enter into heaven.

Perhaps your wicked heart may think there is time enough yet for you to think about dying and going to heaven. O that is a wicked heart indeed that thinks so. Dinah was not ten years of age, and she is dead. A great number of children have died at your age. What an awful thing it will be, if you should die and not love prayer! None ever entered into heaven that did not love prayer. God says he will pour out his fury upon them that call not upon his name.

4. *Dinah took great delight in reading.* She read a great deal in books that speak of good things. The Bible she loved the most of all books. She always called it not merely the Bible, but the Holy Bible. Indeed she was never known to use the word Bible without putting the word Holy to it; though no one in the family used that expression. There were but very few remarkable passages in the Scriptures that she did not remember and know where to find. She frequently sat for hours together with the Bible before her, reading chapter after chapter, and asking the meaning of those she thought could explain it to her.

She frequently gave her own thoughts, which have astonished those who heard her.

The Book of Martyrs employed much of her time. The language and death of those holy men made her wonder at the power of the grace of God. "But," said she, "no wonder they could suffer so much for Christ, considering what he suffered for them. If the Lord was with them they could easily bear it all; for his presence with the three men in the furnace delivered them from the heat of the flames. "Indeed," said she, "I should not wonder if some of the martyrs did not feel more than the three worthies did."

She read a great deal in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Mr. Shrubsole's Christian Memoirs. All the principal characters in those excellent books were perfectly familiar to her. Janeway's Token for Children she read with close attention—with much pleasure and great profit. She pointed out the experience of those children which she thought most resembled her own, and which, upon comparison, appears evidently so. The Life of Mr. Henry Dorney furnished this dear child with many a rich feast for her mind. She seems to have received the whole of this ex-

cellently experimental book into her understanding and her heart.

But as hymns expressed her feelings better than she could express them, she was very fond of reading, learning, and singing them. She often expressed the deep sense she had of the evil of sin, and of the wonderful mercy of God, by singing or repeating this hymn, especially the first verse :

“ And are we wretches yet alive,

“ And do we yet rebel ?

“ ’Tis boundless, ’tis amazing love

“ That bears us up from hell.”

As she was greatly concerned about the state of her soul, she wished very much to know whether she was a real christian or not ; and therefore greatly delighted in the whole of that hymn of Mr. Newton’s, the first verse of which she often repeated with great force of expression :

“ ’Tis a point I long to know,

“ Oft it causes anxious thought,

“ Do I love the Lord, or no,

“ Am I his, or am I not ?”

The state of her mind seemed to be well expressed in the following hymn, as she often sung it with evident seriousness and pleasure :

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,

"Weak and wounded, sick and sore,

"Jesus ready stands to save you,

"Full of pity, join'd with power ;

"He is able,

"He is willing, doubt no more," &c.

How different are some boys and girls from Dinah ? They have no love for reading ; they will make any excuse to neglect their books ; their parents are under the necessity of forcing them to read ; and even then they do not mind what they read. Young Timothy knew the Scriptures from a child. But these wicked children do not wish to know any thing about God, and Jesus Christ, and heaven. O what a sad thing it is for a child to grow up and not love the Bible ! Jesus Christ wept over Jerusalem, and said, " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !" When we think of your wicked tempers, naughty words, and sinful actions, we tremble for you. When it is considered how miserable you will be if you grow up in wickedness ; and what a trouble you will be to your parents ; and if you die so, how awfully miserable

you will be in another world—it is enough to make your parents and ministers weep over you ; O that you did weep for yourselves !

5. Miss Doudney was *very fond of going to hear the word of God*. Her illness prevented her going to public worship so often as she wished ; but while she was able she was very glad to go. She rejoiced to hear the sermon to children on Good Friday. She heard it last Good Friday, and when she went home, she related almost the whole in the order it was delivered ; saying, “ I hope this sermon will make a lasting impression on my mind ; it seems as though Mr. Griffin spoke particularly to me.” She well understood the meaning of that hymn, and frequently sung it :

“ Lord, how delightful ’tis to see

“ A whole assembly worship thee ;

“ At once they sing, at once they pray,

“ They hear of heaven, and learn the way.

“ I have been there, and still would go ;

“ ’Tis like a little heaven below :

“ Not all my pleasures, and my play,

“ Shall tempt me to forget that day.

“ O write upon my mem’ry, Lord,

“ The texts and doctrines of thy word ;

“ That I may break thy laws no more,

“ But love thee better than before.

"With thoughts of Christ, and things divine,  
"Fill up this foolish heart of mine;  
"That, hoping pardon through his blood,  
"I may lie down and wake with God."

When she was in the house of God she listened attentively to hear what was said; she did not look about, but kept her eyes fixed on the minister. Once she said, "I have been looking so long to the minister, that my neck aches so I cannot turn my head." Dinah did not smile at other children in the place of worship; nor play with her fan, nor with her gloves, nor turn over the leaves of the books, as some careless children do. When we see children do such things in the house of God, we know they are not attentive to the minister; and this makes us fear that they do not love God. If you do not love the house of God, can you think of going to heaven? None go to heaven but such as love the service of God on earth. They who go there are continually worshipping him and singing his praises. Can you think, my dear children, that a holy God will suffer any to enter into heaven that do not love him, nor love his house, nor love to be with his people? If you do not love the house of God below, you cannot be fit for the house of God above. Dinah

delighted in the worship of God in this world; and therefore she hoped to enjoy the worship of God in the upper and better world. She often sung the following verse over and over again :

“ Then shall I see, and hear, and know,  
“ All I desired or wished below ;  
“ And every power find sweet employ  
“ In that eternal world of joy.”

6. Dinah had a *great concern for the happiness of others, and possessed a great esteem for the people of God.* When it was told her that her father was going to marry again, she said, “ If it be to one of God’s people, I have no objection.” When a person died, or was particularly spoken of, she was very desirous to know if he was a godly person. It was a great grief to her to hear one profane the name of God, and she was evidently unhappy in the company of the wicked.

When I asked her why she wished me to preach to children after her death, she said, “ Because I wish other children to think about heaven, to hate sin, and to love Jesus Christ. But particularly I wish you to caution them against disobeying their parents ; and tell them they should do all they can to make them happy.” She spoke a great deal to

her brothers and sisters, and to her other young relations. The eldest of them says, "I shall never forget it as long as I live." To one of them that she thought needed admonition and reproof, she gave both, with great tenderness. "You think I don't love you," said she, "but I do love you well enough to dwell with you in heaven through all eternity." She loved the ministers of Jesus Christ because they taught her the way of salvation, and tried to save men from going to hell. The cruelty of Satan in "trying to pull men down into hell with him" often affected her heart very much, and made her pray "that the kingdom of Christ might speedily come all over the earth." Once she said, "I do love the ministers of Christ, and especially my own minister. I love him as much as I love my brother or my father." The night she died, she said, "I want for nothing but to shake hands once more with my minister, and to kiss my father;" a pleasure which, from the lateness of the night, and her not being considered so near death, she did not enjoy.

7. This dear child, for some considerable time before she died, *well understood how sinners are to be saved*. She knew her own goodness could not save her, as God's law was holy, and she had

broken it. She knew it was through faith in what Christ had done and suffered for sinners she was to be saved. Knowing that the law condemned her, she often spoke of the preciousness of Christ, and the efficacy of his blood, by which she was pardoned and accepted of God. In a new hymn-book of Dr. Watts she had folded down the corners of the leaves to eight or nine hymns, in which she principally delighted ; entreating they might not be unfolded till after her death. One of these she often repeated and sung, as expressing her sentiments and experience on this subject :

“ No more, my God, I boast no more

“ Of all the duties I have done ;

“ I quit the hopes I held before,

“ To trust the merits of thy Son.

“ Now for the love I bear his name,

“ What was my gain I count my loss :

“ My former pride I call my shame,

“ And nail my glory to his cross.

“ Yes, and I must and will esteem

“ All things but loss, for Jesus' sake ;

“ O may my soul be found in him,

“ And of his righteousness partake.

“ The best obedience of my hands

“ Dares not appear before thy throne

“ But faith can answer thy demands,

“ By pleading what my Lord has done.”

8. Dinah was *a very good-tempered, affectionate child, and very obedient to her parents.* Her kind disposition made her beloved by all who knew her. The grace of God teaches those who possess it to be good-tempered. Children, who find fault and complain, are discontented, often fretful and angry, are not like Jesus Christ. She did not refuse doing what she was desired to do. When she was bid to do any thing, she did not say, Do you do it, Eliza ; or let William do it ; but was ready to perform whatever was desired. Her aunt does not remember that she was ever bid to do a thing twice. This was following the example of the Lord Jesus, who said, " My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

Dinah did not fret about fine clothes ; but thought more about " the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price." Nor did she envy other children because they might have gayer clothes than herself. Her thoughts were too much employed about better things, to be improperly concerned about these trifles. She begged that no expensive fine things might be used at her funeral. Instead of hearse and coaches, she wished that six young men that feared God might carry her to

church, and her minister walk before them. But such was the state of the weather, that this request could not be complied with.

She was remarkably industrious. Before she was ill, she would play at innocent amusements with other children : she was taught that this was necessary for the cheerfulness of her spirits and the health of her body. But she was very careful not to do it at improper times ; when it was against the will of her friends, or when she should be at school. When she was not at play she would not be idle ; either work or reading kept her constantly employed. This was doing what is right : children should learn to be industrious, and to store their minds with useful knowledge. This is the way to grow up to be useful and happy. There are many promises to those children who love and obey their parents, and study to make them happy. If their father and mother die, the Lord will take them up, and be a father to the fatherless ; but if they be wicked, disobedient children, God will be very angry with them, and make them suffer for it.

9. *Dinah's death was very happy, and we have no doubt but with her "it is well."*

Some time before she died she had very gloo-

my apprehensions of the horrors of the grave. She said, "I cannot bear the thought of lying in the cold grave ; my mind shudders at it." It was said to her, You will rise again at the great day. "I know it," said she " my body and soul will be united again at the resurrection, yet I cannot get rid of the gloomy thought of the cold grave." However, this did not last very long ; after a few weeks' talking, reading, and praying about it, her mind was relieved. She was enabled to think more about the soul than the body. The resurrection of Christ, and the doctrine of the general resurrection, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, freed her mind from distress, and she could think of the grave without being uneasy. She frequently, at this time, sung and meditated on the following verses :

" When from the dead he rais'd his Son,

" And call'd him to the sky,

" He gave our souls a lively hope

" That they should never die.

" What though our inbred sin requires

" Our flesh to see the dust,

" Yet, as the Lord our Saviour rose,

" So all his followers must."

She was at times in considerable distress, doubting whether she should go to heaven when

she died ; because she was, in her own estimation, so great a sinner. She said, " If I were quite sure of going to heaven, I should wish to go immediately." Her aunt said, " Why go immediately ? is it not that you may be delivered from pain of body ?" She paused, and said, " It may be partly so ;" but pausing again, she said, " It is not the only reason ; I principally wish to go to heaven that I may be happy with God." She often wished to be there, to be free from sin ; frequently singing the verses—

" But I shall share a glorious part,  
" When grace hath well refin'd my heart,  
" And fresh supplies of joy are shed,  
" Like holy oil, to cheer my head.

" Sin, my worst enemy before,  
" Shall vex my eyes and ears no more :  
" My inward foes shall all be slain,  
" Nor Satan break my peace again."

Last Christmas twelve months, being very ill, she thought her death was very near. Her eldest sister having a party of young friends coming to see her at her mother's house, she was asked if she would like to go to Louisa's feast. " I am going to a better feast and to better company," was her answer.

Her relations sometimes thought she was getting better, and might recover. Finding, at one time, she did not talk so much about good things as at some other times, they said, "Dinah, you do not talk of heaven, and things of God, as you used to do." She blushed, and said, "I think more than I speak." Her affliction afterwards increasing, and the weather being cold, she could not retire for private prayer as before. This very much grieved her, and made her ask her uncle to pray that the Lord would pardon her neglect of private prayer.

Some time before she died, the doctor intimated she would not live long. A few days after, she said, "The doctor frightened me when he said this would soon terminate in my death." It was said to her, "You are not afraid of death, Dinah?" "No," said she, "I was afraid, but I am not now; the Lord has taken away the fear of death. I believe the Lord is about to take me home soon. I think I shall not live out this week." The night before she died she thanked her aunt for all her kindness to her in getting so many good things for her, and said, "I am as thankful as though I could have taken them all."

The night before the morning on which she

died was nearly all spent in conversing with her sister and the young woman who sat up with her. She pointed out a number of hymns she wished them to read and sing, and was highly delighted with the following verses :

“ Jesus, the vision of thy face  
“ Hath overpowering charms ;  
“ Scarce shall I feel death’s cold embrace,  
“ If Christ be in my arms.

“ Then while ye hear my heart-strings break,  
“ How sweet my minutes roll ;  
“ A mortal paleness on my cheek,  
“ And glory in my soul !”

When the word glory was repeated, she broke out as in an ecstasy, “ O yes, glory in the soul, I shall soon have glory in my soul ?” Soon after, she said, “ I am as I never was in all my life.” Her countenance appearing considerably affected, as though convulsed, her aunt asked her if she was in much pain : she replied, which were the last words she uttered, “ I am quite easy.” In a few moments her soul left this world of sin and affliction to join the church in a state of holiness and happiness in glory.

Now, my dear children, while we are here telling you about Dinah, we hope she is in heaven,

enjoying the presence of God. If you could ask the angels, "Is it well with the child?" they would say. "It is well." And if you could ask her, no doubt but she would say, "It is well." O yes, it must be well to be with Jesus Christ, who takes the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom. The body is like our clothes, which we can put off and yet be the same persons. Dinah's soul was herself, and your soul is yourself. Though her body is in the grave, she herself is in heaven. God is in heaven, you know, and it must be well to be where God is. To see God face to face, and to be like him in holiness, must be well indeed. How happy it must be, to be where there is no sin, no night, no cold, no hunger, nor any pain, nor any death! Do you not suppose Dinah must think it well with her, to be able to talk with Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Paul, and the holy angels, and especially with Jesus Christ? You cannot conceive how happy she is in singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Dinah's mother was a godly woman, and we

have no doubt but she is gone to heaven. She loved God and prayed in secret, and frequently prayed with another little girl, when she was as young as Dinah. But she grew up to be a good woman, and to be a kind mother of six children. Though she had so many little children, and an affectionate husband, she was willing to die. She said, "I must die, and why not now; for however it may appear to us, God's time is the most convenient." As her death drew near, she appeared nearer in spirit to her God. She spent much of her time in communion with him. On Thursday evening, March 27, 1799, she hoped to be gone before morning. At six o'clock she said, "I hope I shall be at rest before seven." This was not the case, as she did not take her farewell of these mortal shores until between one and two the next morning. She was quite sensible till the last minute, and truly happy in God. About half an hour before her departure, she said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." She paused—then said, "Jesus, my Lord, I know his name." About three minutes before she breathed her last, she said, "A light, a light!" Her friends bringing a candle, she put it away, saying, "Not that light." Probably implying it was some divine communi-

cation to her soul that she meant. Perhaps we shall never know what that light was, till, like her, we come to the confines of immortal glory.

My dear children, dont you think that Dinah's mother, who was so good a woman, would have been very glad, if she had been alive, to have seen her dear child die happy? You cannot think what a pleasure it is to godly parents when their children die, to see them die in the Lord. But O, what transports of joy must Dinah and her mother have felt, when they met in heaven, to spend an eternity together in the presence of God! There is joy in heaven among the angels of God when a sinner repenteth. What joy, then, do you think Dinah's mother must feel, to consider that her dying prayers for her children were answered in one of them, and that the first that died entered into glory! May she be the forerunner of all the other children. May the Lord grant your parents may die like her mother; and you all live and die like Dinah!

My dear children, why should you not be as much concerned about the salvation of your soul, as this child was about hers? Your souls are as valuable to you as Dinah's was to her. What would it profit you if you could gain the whole

world and lose your soul? or what could you give in exchange for your soul? You may die very young, as well as Dinah, and why then not seek to enter into heaven, as well as other good children?

To love real religion, while you are young, is the way to be happy through life, to have a joyful death, and a glorious eternity. It is the way to make others happy, and to make wise and good men love you. Some of the greatest and holiest men mentioned in the word of God, were truly godly while they were very young. You have read of the good prince Abijah, in whom there was some good thing found towards the Lord God of Israel while he was very young, even though he lived in a very wicked family. You know that "stripling David" feared and loved God when he was but a youth, and was raised from a shepherd to be a king. Josiah, the king of Israel, before he was sixteen years of age, sought to know the Lord God of his fathers. Samuel and Timothy loved the word and the house of God from their childhood. You have a great many encouragements to seek to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and to love and serve God. Good people love you and pray for you: your minis-

ter loves you dearly, and prays earnestly for you ; your parents love you, and if they be godly they pray for you ; but Jesus Christ loves little children better than any of us.

Now, my dear little children, who were brothers, sisters, and cousins of Dinah, I hope you will long remember what she said to you, and what a good child she was. We have great reason to think she is gone to heaven ? Do you think if you were to die, you should go where Dinah is ? Do you think you are fit for heaven ? Some of you are older than she was, yet you do not know so much about the word of God, nor think so much about good things, as she did. What an awful thing it would be, if, when you die, you should not go where she is. How would it pain you to see your dear sister or cousin in Abraham's bosom, and you shut out, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Do, my dear young friends, think very seriously of this ; and may the Lord cause it to have a lasting impression on your hearts !

That little boy, and that little girl there : one has a little brother, and the other a little sister, gone to heaven ; but I am afraid you do not think much about going to heaven. Remember, they

that are going to heaven are the best off. If you should believe in Jesus Christ, and love him, you will go to heaven when you die, and then it will be well with you for ever ; but if you grow up in wickedness, and die without being made a new creature in Christ Jesus, you will never go where Dinah is, and where the holy angels and good men and women are.

We may see from this child's religious experience and happy death, what the Spirit of God can do upon the hearts even of young children. " Out of the mouth of babes " he has " perfected praise." Wherever there is a real experience of the love of God, the Holy Spirit is the cause of it, whether it be in a child or a grown person. Surely nothing is too hard for the Lord ! He can as easily teach a child as a man. He may have taught this child such blessed things, in order to make some grown people reflect upon their condition. Perhaps there are some present who are men and women, who have been taught by this child what they have not yet known. Some are even fathers and mothers who have never read their Bible so much, nor engaged so often in private prayer as Dinah did in the short time she lived. What a reproof this is to such persons, that a child not

ten years old should know more of divine things than persons who are more than thirty or forty years of age. Is it not to be feared, that what Jesus Christ said of the queen of Sheba may be said of Dinah,—she shall rise up in judgment against some of this generation and condemn them? O that she and other good children may not rise up in judgment against any of you. There can be no doubt but many children who die in infancy will be happy in heaven; while their parents, through wickedness and unbelief, will be shut out. But O, who can describe the anguish such parents will feel, to see their dear children in glory, and themselves the companions of wicked spirits for ever and ever!

Miss Doudney's case shows us what a blessed advantage it is for children to have parents or relations to teach them the fear of the Lord while they are young, and pray for them and with them. Godly parents may be the means of the salvation of their children. But O, how ought it to pain our hearts that so many dear children have parents who have not the fear of God before their eyes! They know not how to teach their dear offspring the way of salvation. They have never known it themselves. If some of their children were ill,

and were as thoughtful about good things as Dinah was, they would not know how to talk to them, nor how to pray for them. O that such parents would but consider their latter end, and the value of the souls of their children !

Dr. Cotton Mather had fifteen children, and lived to see the greatest part of them die in the Lord. When they were capable of understanding him he would take them alone one by one, and after many affectionate admonitions to the child, he would pray with them, and make him the witness of the agonies and strong cries with which, on his behalf, he addressed the throne of grace. Go, ye fathers and mothers, and do likewise ; and the Lord fulfil all your petitions.

A child, eight years of age, once asked his father why he did not pray for him, as some good parents he had read of prayed for their children. The father, looking steadfastly at his dear boy, paused—then sighed—then wept—and, pressing the child to his bosom, said, "No wonder I have not prayed for you, my dear, I have never prayed for myself." "Then I will pray for you, papa," said the child. This was the means of the conversion both of the father and mother. Dear children, ask your parents to pray for you and

with you ; and if they will not, then each of you go by yourself, and pray for them.

Ye godly parents and relations who have been favored with such a blessing from your heavenly Father ! a child you dearly loved, blessed with such pleasing evidences of the gracious state of her soul, is now realizing more than has ever entered into your hearts to conceive. Rejoice, and wipe every tear from your eyes. Her light afflictions, which were but for a moment, are now exchanged for an eternal weight of glory. God has done great things for her, whereof you have cause to be glad. May your other children receive a double portion of Dinah's spirit. May other godly parents take encouragement from your mercies, and cry mightily unto God, giving him no rest till he make their children a praise in the churches. May you, my dear children and young friends, remember your Creator in the days of your youth. Never forget that Jesus Christ said, " I love them that love me ; and they that seek me early shall find me." If you seek and find him, then, in all the circumstances of life—in the hour of death—in the day of judgment—and through eternity—you will have to say, with Dinah, IT IS WELL.

with you, and if they will not, then what can you  
 do for yourself, and pray for them.  
 The good parents and teachers who have been  
 favored with such a blessing from your heavenly  
 Father! a child you dearly loved, placed with  
 such pleasing anticipations of the glorious state of  
 his soul, is now returning home, his eyes are  
 turned into your hearts to receive his portion, and  
 wipe every tear from your eyes. How great a  
 loss, which pains him for a moment, and how ex-  
 changed for an eternal weight of glory. God has  
 changed that which was temporal, and is now  
 to be eternal. May your other children be  
 a double portion of His love. May other  
 good parents take encouragement from your  
 example, and may angels and God, giving him  
 no rest till he has ministered to him a portion in the  
 church. May you see how children are  
 blessed, and may your young people be in the day of  
 your reward. I never forget that I am a minister,  
 and I love them that love me; and I say that with  
 the very best and me. If you are not, and still  
 think that in all the circumstances of life, in the  
 hour of death—in the day of judgment—and  
 through eternity—you will feel as easy, with  
 thank it is well, as I do now.

## CHILDREN OF THE FOREST.

## CHILDREN OF THE FOREST

## THE

# CHILDREN OF THE FOREST.

In a remote settlement upon the head waters of the Delaware, where the people live generally by lumbering, and in most cases with difficulty procure a bare subsistence for themselves and children, it pleased the Great Head of the Church, while the writer of this was preaching the Gospel for a little season among them, to pour out his Spirit, and greatly to revive his work. Multitudes on every side were found turning to the Lord. Let a minister of the Gospel enter their little cottages, and frequently before he could be seated, even children would come around him and inquire, with tears, what they should do to be saved. When asked, as they sometimes were, why they wept, they would reply, "because we are so great sinners against God; we have offended him, and we fear his wrath upon us."

One evening as a prayer-meeting was held in the neighborhood, and many were weeping for sin, and an unusual solemnity rested on all present, just as the exercises commenced a middle-

aged man arose, and with a faltering voice and evident emotion said, "I have a request to make to the meeting." He paused for a moment and then proceeded nearly as follows :

"As I was leaving home my two little boys came to me and said, 'Father, we wish to go to meeting ; we must die as well as you ; and have souls to be saved or lost, and we cannot be saved unless we are cleansed in the fountain of a Saviour's blood and our darkened souls are enlightened by his Spirit. We hear the Lord is among the people, and we may never witness a revival of religion here again ; we wish very much to go.' My dear children, said I, you have no clothes fit to be seen there in : they, however, still plead to go, and when I told them they were not in a situation to be seen at any public meeting, and must be content to remain where they were, they both sat down and wept. 'Well, father,' said they, 'if we cannot go to meeting, will you not ask the people to pray for us, that God may have mercy upon us, and give us new hearts, and wash our souls white in the blood of Christ ?' This," he added, "is the request I have to make."

It is hardly necessary to say, that their case was remembered, many petitions directed to the

throne of grace for them, and a deep interest awakened in their behalf.

Sometime afterwards, as I was making a religious visit to a family in the remote part of the settlement, while engaged in the exercises usual on such occasions, two boys entered the room, apparently about the age of ten and twelve years, and the woman of the house told me that they lived in the neighborhood, and were the children that a few nights before had been prayed for at the meeting. I was much pleased in seeing them and having an opportunity of religious conversation with them.

Calling one of them to me, I said to him, "Well, my son, how is it with your soul? Do you think you have yet found Christ to be precious to you?" He replied, "I hope, sir, I have."

"Well," said I, "let me know a little how you got along: what it was that first made you concerned about your eternal interests, and brought you to seek your Creator in the days of your youth."

The following history, essentially, was then given by these young and artless pupils in the school of Christ; in narrating which, it is proper

to remark, that I use my own language rather than theirs, and that several of the particulars embodied in the narrative were afterwards more fully learned from their parents and others. The principal facts, however, and the general tenor and import of their communications, were in substance as here recorded.

The first thing, said the one then standing by my side, that made an impression on my mind, was a conversation which a travelling minister some time ago had at our house with my mother and us. Coming into the house, the first words he said to us were, that he had called at our house to-day, not on a worldly errand, but on the concerns of the immortal soul ; that he came to us in the name of the God of heaven, and wished a few moments' conversation. My father not being at home, my mother handed him a chair and he sat down. He then requested to have a Bible. My mother arose, and after looking in several places, at length found the Bible in the back part of a small cupboard, and much covered with dust, and as she gave it to him, wiped off the dust with her apron.

"This dust," said he, looking at my mother

with a solemn countenance, "will rise up in judgment against you and your husband and children in the great day of final account. It is an evidence that the Bible is little regarded in your family, that there is here no morning and evening worship, and that you are living 'without God and without hope in the world.' " He further said that the Bible was God's word, and that he alone, by his Spirit, could enable us properly to understand it; and that before we undertook to read it we should always seek for wisdom and guidance from on high, that we might not mistake the truth and plunge into error. For want of the accompanying influence of the Spirit, many read the Bible, said he, to little purpose all their days, and at last go down to hell, as it were, with the Bible in their hands.

He then offered up a short prayer, the substance of which was, that God, for Christ's sake, would pour the light of the Gospel into our hearts, that our souls might be cleansed from all pollution, and that God would take away the heart of stone and give us hearts of flesh. He particularly mentioned my father and mother and my brother and myself in his prayer, and when he remarked upon the awful eternity to which we were hastening,

it seemed to go like a dagger to our hearts: mother wept, and I almost cried aloud from the distress I felt at the thought of entering eternity unprepared.

After prayer he read a part of the 3d chapter of John, where Christ taught Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth; and told us that these words applied equally to each one of us; that we could no more enter into the kingdom of God without a new heart than Nicodemus could.

After dwelling on this some time, he suddenly turned to brother and myself, and asked us if we ever prayed, if we made it a point to direct our thoughts to God and call upon his name the first thing we did when we awoke in the morning? "For instance," said he, "how did you conduct this morning? What were your first thoughts when you awoke and found it was light? Did you think of God, or was your worldly business or play uppermost in your mind?" I candidly confessed to him what had been my own feelings, that the first thing I thought of was to get up and go about my play or my work, and that God and prayer had occupied no part of my thoughts.

He then addressed us particularly, and told us that the eyes of God, as a flame of fire, were at

our bed-side every morning, and that God noticed whether we called upon his name or not. He further told us that we were manifestly living far from God, and in the service of the devil, that we worshipped the God of this world instead of the Lord of heaven and earth, that the curse of God was upon us, according as it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;" and that if we should die in our present thoughtless, prayerless condition, everlasting misery would be our portion.

Many other things he said to us, the particulars of which I have in a great measure forgotten, but the effect of what was said cannot be effaced from my mind. I felt like a poor condemned criminal, and had not one word to say in reply. I was pained in my very heart. I tried to think of some good things I had done, but could fix on none. The more I looked back into my past life for something to comfort me, the more I recollected one sin here and another there, until it seemed to me that all the sins I had ever committed rose up before me, and that the minister was acquainted with them all. I felt that God saw me and was angry with me, and that if I

should be called away from time to eternity, I must be lost for ever. My feelings I tried to hide as long as I could, but was not able to conceal them. I looked at my brother, and saw him weeping as I was, and, as he afterwards told me, from the same cause.

After finishing his address to us, he kneeled down and prayed with us, and affectionately commended us to God and the keeping of his grace. Then rising to take leave of us, he took me by the hand and said, Perhaps I shall never see you again until I meet you at the bar of judgment; will you, my child, set out in the strength of the Lord to pray at least three times every day, in the name of Christ, that God will give you a new heart, and take away the separating wall in your soul, until Christ the King of glory shall come in, old things shall pass away, and all things become new?

I told him, the Lord helping me, I would.

He then put the same question to my brother, and obtained a similar answer.

Then taking leave of our mother, he said, God in his providence has brought you into the married state, and you have become the mother of dear children, and what has been your conduct to-

wards them ? When they were first laid in your arms, did you by faith and prayer lay them at the feet of Christ, and with a broken and contrite heart entreat him to plant the seeds of piety early in their tender minds, that they might grow up before him as plants of righteousness, and become at last heirs of eternal life ? Have you from day to day prayed with and for your children, and as God commanded the Israelites, have you "talked to them of these things when you sat in the house, and when you walked by the way, and when you lay down, and when you rose up ?"

Our mother replied that she had not, and seemed much grieved at her conscious omission of duties.

He then referred her to the example of pious men in every age of the world ; how solicitous they had been to cultivate religion in their families, and bring up their children in the fear of God—how ungrateful and unreasonable it was to live from day to day upon the bounties of a liberal Providence, and yet not to acknowledge the hand whence her mercies flowed ; and in conclusion he pointed her to the awful solemnities of the judgment-day, when she and her husband and children must meet their last great trial,

and account for neglected duties and misimproved privileges.

Seeing her much affected with these questions and remarks, he likewise put to her the question he had proposed to us, and asked her whether she would not in good earnest, from this day, seek her own salvation and that of her dear family.

Being answered in the affirmative, he further said, "If your husband returns home this evening, will you endeavor to prevail on him to read for you the word of God, and to pray with you and your children?" She told him she would.

Then turning to us he said, "Children, when your father comes in to-night, will one or both of you take him by the hand and ask him to pray with you before you go to sleep, and tell him as much as you can recollect of our conversation to-day, and remind him that God requires these duties of him, and that he must *soon* answer for it, if he neglects them, at the bar of judgment?"

We assured him that we would endeavor to do so in the best way we could.

"And tell him from me," said he, "to read the sixteenth chapter of Luke, beginning at the nineteenth verse."

This good man then left us, and the conversa-

tion of that day was the first thing that awakened my brother and myself to a serious concern about our souls. The promises we then made we have not forgotten, and God in great mercy, as we trust, has given to us the consolations of his grace, and sealed on our hearts a sense of forgiving love.

The child having proceeded thus far with his affecting narrative, I inquired how they all fulfilled the engagement they had made respecting their father; whether they spoke to him as directed, upon his return home; what effect it seemed to produce, and what had been the exercises of their own minds before they found comfort.

Upon this the same lad that had spoken before continued in substance as follows :

When my father came in at night, my mother and we sat before the fire, and he, as usual, took his seat in the corner. He looked at our mother and us and said, What is the matter with you all—you seem to be in such a serious mood? Now, thought I, is the time to fulfil the promise made to the minister to speak to father on the concerns of his soul, and to ask him to pray for us. But I was secretly afraid—I did not know but he would

be angry. I inwardly prayed the Lord to help me, and then arose from my seat and went directly to him and took his hand in mine, but as I was going to speak I burst into tears and could not for some time say any thing; this very much affected my mother and brother, and seemed to alarm my father.

"My dear wife and children," said he, "what is the matter? what has happened that you seem to be all in such trouble?"

I then said, Father, you and we must all die, and perhaps before the light of to-morrow morning the soul of some one of us may be in eternity. There has been a minister here to-day, and he read to us in the Bible that we must be born again of the Spirit of God, and have new hearts, or we can never enter heaven; but on the contrary must spend an endless eternity in "the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." The minister told us that it was your duty to pray with us every morning and evening, for that "God would pour out his fury upon the heathen and the families that call not upon his name." And, father, you have never done this. We have never heard your voice in prayer, and how will you meet your family in the day of judgment, where you must account for

every neglect of duty, and for every deed done in the body ? God will help you to pray, if you make the attempt in earnest. If you try, and do not pray more than a dozen words, if these come from the heart it will be prayer.

I said no more, and all was silent for a moment.

My father then with a deep sigh said, "What the minister has told you is no doubt the truth, and what you have mentioned of my neglect of duty my heart tells me is but too true. My very soul is troubled when I think how I have lived before you, and what an example I have set you."

I then mentioned to him the chapter the minister had directed him to read, and brought him the Bible.

He opened it, and began to read of the rich man in hell and of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. He had not read far before I saw a tear fall upon the leaves of the Bible ; he stopped reading, partly closed the Bible, and said, Yes, children, there is a hell, no doubt ; for these are the words of Christ, who never uttered a falsehood ; and what a mercy of God it is that I have been kept out of it as long as I have. How many poor souls have been cut down in the midst of their sins and sent to that place of misery where there is not a drop of

water to cool their burning tongues, while God has spared me in my rebellion even to this day. When God made me the head of a family and a parent of children, I knew that my situation became a very responsible one. I ought to have sought help from God to pray with you and for you; I ought to have committed you to his care from day to day, and besought him to cleanse your souls in the blood of Christ, that you might grow up as plants of righteousness; but I have neglected it. My heart condemns me, and how much more God, who is greater than my heart. Death is a terror to me. If I should die this night, I could look for nothing but the portion of the rich man of whom we have just read. I have neglected my own soul and the souls of my family, and at the bar of God you will rise up and be witnesses against me. It was God, I trust, who sent the minister to our house to-day, and may he reward him for his labor of love in conversing and praying with you and your dear mother, and thus discharging duties which I ought long ago to have attempted. And I now call you to witness that, God helping me, I will live no more as I have done; I will no longer restrain prayer in my house, but will begin this very night

to seek God with my whole heart, and break off from those sins which have so long provoked him to anger. From this day (however broken and imperfect my prayers may be) there shall be a family altar in my house, and we must seek the Lord together in the best way we can. As regards the things of this world my heart does not accuse me. I have labored faithfully to get bread and clothing for you to make you comfortable. Many a time have I been out, even to a late hour of the night, laboring and toiling for you. My conscience does not upbraid me for neglecting your worldly interests; but, alas, I have lived only for this world, and have been as neglectful of my own soul and yours also, as if there were no hereafter and we were to die like the brutes. I have only sought the bread that perisheth, while that which cometh down from heaven has been but little thought of.

My father here paused, and after my mother had said a few words, regretting their neglect of duties, and urging the necessity of an immediate attention to the great concerns of their souls, he said, "Let us try to pray;" we all kneeled down, and he proceeded in substance as follows:

Oh Lord, for Christ's sake have mercy upon me

and upon my wife and children. Pour down thy good Spirit upon us, and take away our hard and stony hearts, and give us hearts of flesh; send out the arrows of conviction, and give me unfeigned penitence for sin; let the great deep of sin be broken up in my soul, and show me all the abominations of my heart before it is too late. Help me to work out my salvation with fear and trembling; and let sin be slain in me by the power of the Holy Ghost; give me a spirit of prayer and supplication, and help me from this day forward to erect and maintain an altar for thy service in my house. Lord, help my wife and children to call upon thee aright, and give them likewise of thy grace to spend the rest of their days in thy service. Give us all hearts to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of our souls, and let us all be thoroughly cleansed from all pollution in the fountain of his blood.

Here he stopped, and without getting from his knees, or any of us rising, he called upon my mother to continue prayer for a moment longer, when she began, and poured out her soul in prayer very much as follows:

Oh God, have mercy upon me and my children and husband. Truly, Lord, my soul is stained

with guilt in regard to the children thou hast given me, and my numberless provocations directly against thee. When I look over my past life, and remember my many broken vows, I am covered with confusion. When my children were born into the world I did solemnly engage before thee that if thou wouldst be with me and support me I would then serve thee ; but, wretch that I have been, as soon as thy mercies were experienced I forgot them. As soon as, through thy goodness, I became the living mother of a living child, my heart went out to the creature and forgot the Creator. Little did I think that the children thou gavest me were still thine, and that I was in duty bound to bring them up in thy fear and to thy glory. Little have I thought of the value and importance of the Bible, which in thy holy providence thou didst put into my hands, and which, instead of perusing for my own instruction, and reading to my family for their benefit, I have permitted to gather dust for weeks and months unnoticed and untouched. When I call these things to remembrance, Oh God, guilt harrows up my soul, and I am afraid of thy judgments. Oh, for Christ's sake, cleanse my polluted heart and blot out all my sins. Help me by the eye of

faith to look away to Christ as the stung Israelite in the wilderness looked to the brazen serpent. And Oh, remember likewise my husband and these dear children which thou hast given us. Take the veil from their hearts and pour the light of the ever-blessed Gospel into their souls. Oh give them unfeigned sorrow for sin, and direct them by thy Spirit to a bleeding Saviour, even to that Lamb of God who "taketh away the sins of the world."

After mother had ended, father still continued in a praying posture, and told me and my brother to pray. This we attempted to do in a few words as well as we could, and then we all arose and sat up. All continued silent for some time, and truly it was a solemn silence. We had witnessed a scene which filled our minds with deep reflections then, and made an impression which cannot be effaced.

Next morning my father appeared exceedingly unhappy, and when he came in to breakfast and sat down, mother, seeing him so troubled, said to him, "Don't be discouraged, get the Bible and try to pray with us again this morning, look to the Lord for assistance, and he will not forsake those who hope in his mercy."

He accordingly took the Bible, and as he laid his hand upon it said, "This book I am fearful will one day rise up in judgment against us, for it has been indeed a neglected book." He then read a chapter and prayed with us; he seemed deeply affected throughout the whole exercise, and his mind seemed to be drawn out in very humble confession of sin and neglected duties.

When he arose, the first word he said was, My sins have found me out; they rise like clouds over my wretched, darkened soul, and call aloud for vengeance. The Bible condemns me in every page, and expressly declares that "the soul that sinneth shall die." I am indeed fearful I have gone too far, and that God's mercies are clean gone for ever.

My mother-tried to comfort him in the best way she could, and told him that it is written, "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." But she was so troubled for her own sins that she was poorly qualified to administer comfort to others.

After breakfast, when he went out to his labor in the woods as usual, he took the Bible with him, and as he left the house he said, "I do not know but it is a gone case with me, and that I have sinned away my day of grace. But if I must

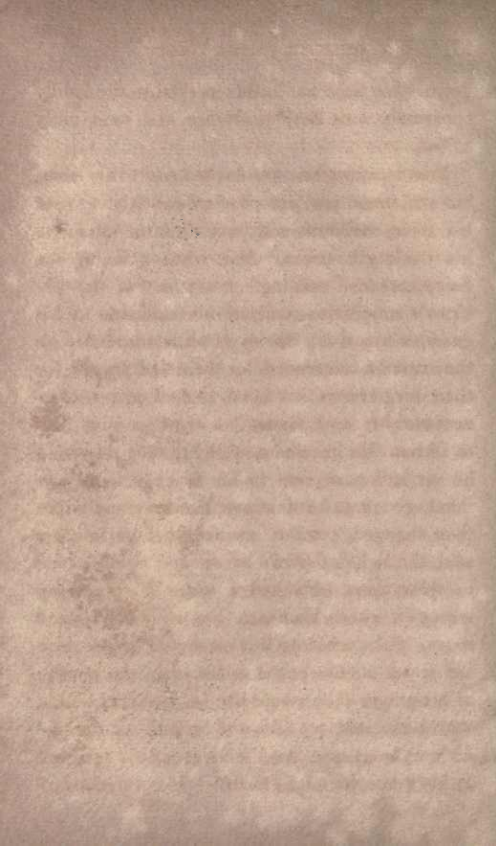
die, I will die praying, will die at the gate of mercy. If I must perish, it shall be at a Saviour's feet." As he went on to his place of labor it was with a heavy heart; a sense of sin seemed to press him to the earth, and the tear of sorrow for his numberless transgressions frequently rolled down his cheeks and dropped along his path. When he remembered how kind God had been to him all his life, how he had fed and clothed him, and continued him in being when many others had fallen around him on every side, and remembered that he had, notwithstanding all this, lived as unmindful of his obligations to God as the brutes that perish; the view was almost insupportable.

When he came to the place where his work was, he sat down upon a log and opened his Bible, and read in the twentieth chapter of Exodus the law of God. This brought to his remembrance his misspent Sabbaths and his former profane use of the sacred name of God, and awakened in his heart a still deeper sense of his guilt and wretchedness. Instead of engaging in his labor, most of the day was spent in reading and prayer.

At night he returned home pensive and cast



CHILDREN OF THE FOREST—p. 96.



down. He said but little ; prayed in the family apparently with deep penitence, and went early to bed.

Next morning he went out as usual to his labor, but still found much more of a disposition to read his Bible, meditate, and pray, than to attend to his worldly business. And while perusing the Scriptures and reading an account of our Saviour's crucifixion, and of his kindness to his enemies, insomuch that even while suspended on the cross he interceded for them and prayed for their forgiveness, his heart melted into tenderness and his soul seemed to overflow with love to Christ. He kneeled down by the log on which he sat, and gave vent to his feelings in devout thanksgiving and ardent supplication ; and while thus engaged, comfort seemed to flow into his soul, the light of God's reconciled countenance to shine upon him, and a sense of pardoning mercy to rejoice his heart. But while he rejoiced it was with trembling lest he should be deceived and speak a false peace to his soul ; the burden of his prayer then seemed to be, that God would search him and try him, and let him not deceive his own heart, and that if he was indeed renewed by his grace, he might have brighter evidence of

it from day-to-day, and that the light in his soul, like the path of the just, might be brighter and brighter to the perfect day. His comforts seem to be those which the Holy Spirit communicates, for they have continued ; his soul seems greatly to rejoice in hope, and his walk to be such as becomes the Gospel.

With respect to our mother, she found no peace of mind from the time of the minister's visit until she found it, as she trusts, in the peace-speaking blood of the Redeemer. She is now walking in the hope of the Gospel ; and since the revival here, she has been much engaged in holding little female prayer-meetings, and visiting those who were under concern of mind, and directing them to the Lamb of God who takes away sin.

Here the boy who gave me the account which I have thus attempted to relate closed his narrative, when I said to him, " My son, you have truly given me much satisfaction in telling of the religious exercises of your father and mother ; but the main thing is yet behind, and that is to hear something of your own experience from the time your father first prayed with you." He then

proceeded, and gave me the following statement as nearly as can be recollected :

As I said before, continued he, my first conviction of sin took place under the prayer and through the conversation of that man of God who providentially visited our house, and was much increased from the circumstances which immediately followed in our family. Agreeably to the direction of the minister, I was much engaged in prayer to God for several days, that he would give me true repentance for all my sins ; that he would take away the heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh—that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon my soul, and enable me to lay hold of Christ by a living faith. I felt as if I never could give over this matter, for I saw plainly that, if I did not succeed, and should die without an interest in Christ, I was lost for ever.

My brother at the same time was exercised very much like myself, and every night when we went to bed, and every morning when we arose, we would first kneel down at our bed-side and unite in prayer to God—first one would lead in prayer, and then the other.

For a long time before this I used to say over a short form of prayer every night when I went

to rest, but my heart was not in it. As soon as I had done repeating the words I thought no more of God or my soul's concerns. My mind would run after every worldly vanity, and sometimes I would fall asleep almost before the prayer was ended. I knew nothing of myself or my need of Christ. My soul was dark as the shades of midnight, and Satan was leading me directly down to hell by making me content with a form, and permitting me to pray just enough to ease my conscience, and no more. But now it seemed to me prayer came indeed from the heart. My form was laid aside, and I found no difficulty in calling on God for mercy and such blessings as I felt I stood in need of.

Formerly when I awoke in the morning the first thing that came to mind was either my play or my business ; God was not in all my thoughts. But now it was very different ; my first meditations were on God. I usually reflected in the morning what a mercy it was that I had lived through another night and was yet out of hell ; I looked back upon my past life and saw that I had lived worse than the brutes, for they would own their master and bow their necks to man, but I had never acknowledged God as I ought,

or bowed my heart to his laws. I never awoke without thinking upon the character given me by the minister, when in answer to this question "what I usually thought of in the morning," I told him either my play or my work, he said to me that I was a child of the devil, an heir of hell, and under the curse of a righteous God.

But now my brother and I not only endeavored to remember God every day in prayer before we left our room, but through the day we would retire together two or three times into the barn or woods and cry to God for mercy and the salvation of our never-dying souls. I continued in this way for some time, but could make no progress. I felt alarmed about myself, and though I could not restrain prayer, yet it seemed as if all my praying amounted to nothing. Sometimes I would think that I was indeed such a wretch that God would not hear or regard me; and Satan, taking advantage of my perplexity, would suggest to me that I did not pray aright; that my heart was not in my prayers; that to offer up such petitions as I did, and with so hard a heart, was only a solemn mockery of God, and that I had better give up prayer altogether. Sometimes I was almost ready to yield to his suggestions;

but then again I would reflect that praying could not make my case worse : " If I stay where I am, hell will be my portion, and if I cry to God and am rejected, I can but go there at last ; and who knows but the Lord may yet have mercy upon me, that I perish not ?"

One day as I went out alone to pray, I felt very dark and gloomy, and the temptation pressed me very hard to give up the subject of religion, but an observation the minister made to me came to my recollection, and in some degree comforted me. " The darkest hour," said he, " is just before day ; and God's mercies are often nearest when the sinner is led to think they are clean gone for ever ;" and if so, thought I, who knows but the day of my deliverance may be nigh. I bowed before the Lord again in prayer, and made lamentation over my hard and wicked heart, and entreated of him that Christ might be revealed to my soul the hope of glory, and that he would not leave me to perish in my sins, when there was " balm in Gilead and a Physician there."

While thus engaged, the dark cloud that so long rested upon me was removed, and my soul was filled with light, and joy, and love. I saw my

sins were great, but I remembered that "the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin," and that he is "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins." My darkness was turned into day, and my mourning into rejoicing. The relief I found was obtained soon after my brother and I had been prayed for in meeting, and I trust was in answer to the prayers which had there been offered up.

Here the lad ended his account of himself, and as the brother had in the meantime attended with great seriousness and said little, I called him to me and inquired what had been the dealings of the Lord with him.

In his statement he very much corroborated every thing his brother had advanced, and gave me the fullest conviction that he also had tasted of the grace of God and was an heir of everlasting life. When, among other things, he stated to me how differently the concerns of the family were carried on from what they were a little while ago, it was with tears and emotion which almost choked his utterance.

Formerly, said he, there was a great deal of

noise and confusion in our house, and we were all at times very unhappy. Father was somewhat inclined to intemperance, and used very ill language ; and although when sober he was an industrious and tender parent, yet when a little intoxicated he treated mother and us very unkindly. But now we have constant peace and comfort at home. Whenever he comes in from work and has a moment's leisure he reads the Bible and endeavors to explain to us what he reads. No matter how late he comes in at night, he always reads a chapter and attends prayer before he retires to bed ; and however hurrying his business may be in the morning, family worship must first be attended before we sit down to breakfast. No more spirituous liquor is brought home or admitted into the house, and no more profane language is heard. He is now providing good clothes for us to go to church in as fast as he can ; and he is very careful to see that we do not associate, as we used to do, with bad children in the neighborhood, and often asks us whether we pray every day in secret, and whether we enjoy the presence of God with our souls. He frequently advises us to guard against formality in prayer. If the heart feels hard and dull, he tells us not to

give over prayer until we feel some moving of the Spirit on the soul, and have some evidence that we enjoy communion with God; for by neglecting this it is that we lose the comfort of religion, and by and by rest satisfied with the form without the power of godliness.

Every thing seems to go on well with us at present, and we have the prospect not only of enjoying much more comfort on earth than we ever had before as a family, but likewise of dwelling for ever together in that world where friends part no more; and all this we must ascribe (as a means) to the faithful visit of that dear man, whom God, in his providence, directed to our house to talk with us on the concerns of eternity.

The writer of this would state, in conclusion, that in visiting through the neighborhood he came at length to the family where these dear children lived, and found that their representation had been strictly correct. It was a family truly blest of God, and every member of it was walking, to appearance, in the light of his countenance.

From the foregoing account we may remark :

1. What a heavenly charity that is which furnishes the means of sending out faithful missionaries into the destitute regions of the earth, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to millions sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

2. How important is it that ministers of the Gospel, whether laboring as missionaries or settled pastors, should perform *family visitation*, and thus preach the Gospel from house to house. Their hearers cannot, under such circumstances, as in large assemblies, apply the word to their neighbors, but their consciences are made to address them with the emphatic language, "Thou art the man."

3. Lastly, we see the awful guilt of those parents who neglect the religious instruction of their families, and the sad foundation hereby laid of future remorse and sorrow. If their minds should be enlightened this side of the grave to see their guilt, how will they lament that they have so shamefully neglected their duties and jeopardized the everlasting welfare of their children! And if they should not awake to a sense of their neglect until they meet their families in a future

world of wo, how dreadful there to see the smoke of their torment ascending for ever and ever, and to feel the gnawing of that worm which never dies, and which is ever reminding them, that all this is because they obeyed not God,—because they did not bring up their children in his admonition and fear.

THE END.







2/6

